

# Newsday

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50¢

## SMASHALOT

Broadway shows led by 'Spamalot' take in record \$825M in 2005

A6



Cops: Boy, 2, got drunk in baby-sitter's care **A3**

## COLISEUM TOWER



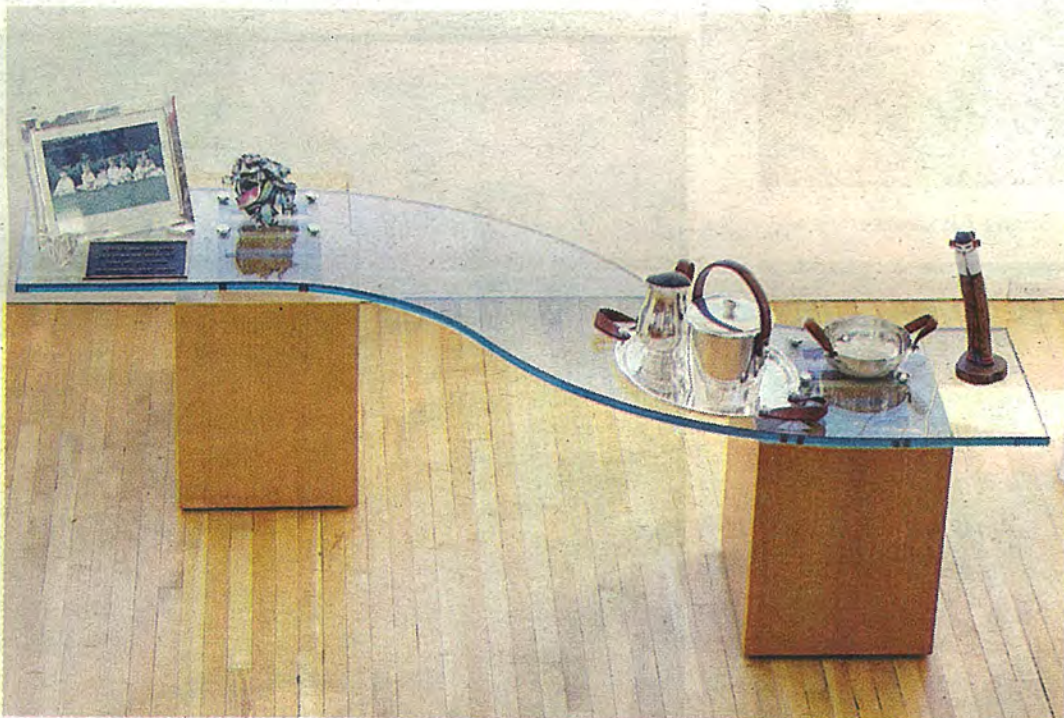
# Down To Earth

Wang drops 60-story 'icon' from Nassau Hub proposal **A5**

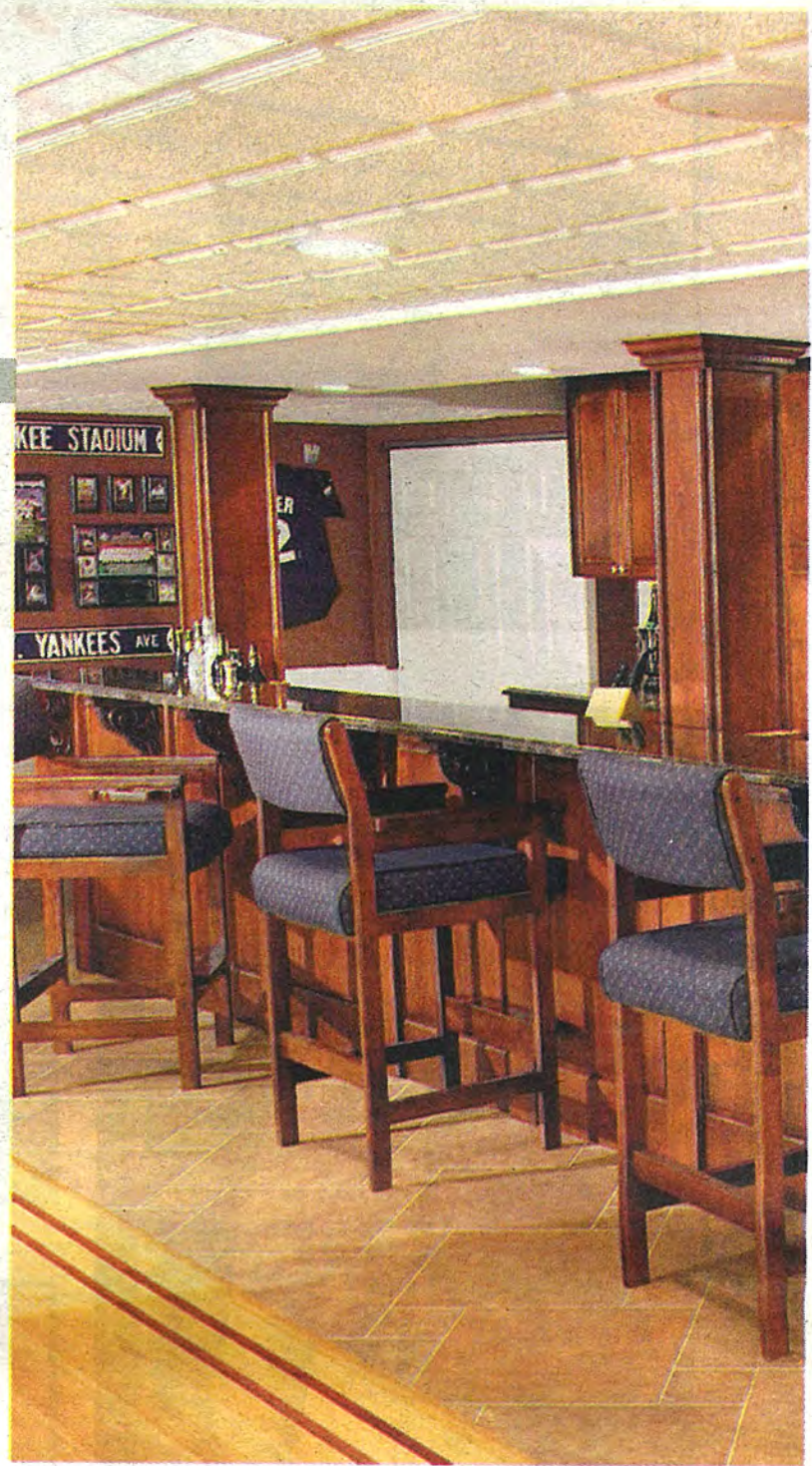


# home

## a toast to the home bar



Michael Spector designed this decorative curved-glass bar for his own living room.



No longer confined to the rec room, it's winning new cheers from those who love to entertain

BY CAROL POLSKY  
STAFF WRITER

**D**enise Mallia had a vision, she said, at one of the huge basement bashes her husband, Paul, loves to host for their East Setauket neighbors, and for family. Seventy partying guests chattered and joked as the bartender handed out mixed drinks and shots from behind the 22-foot-long granite-topped bar, cigarette smoke rose up to the exhaust unit in the ceiling and balls clicked on the pool table lit by a stained-glass fixture overhead.

"I looked down there," she recalled, "and there were people wall-to-wall having a ball, and I said, 'I feel like I'm in a bar in Huntington.'"

"It's what I always wanted to do," Paul Mallia, 41, said of a 2-year-old renovation of the

3,000-square-foot basement that included a second, elaborate kitchen set up in an alcove behind the bar. "I would walk into one of your finer restaurants and see those cherry mahogany bars and I would love that rich dark look."

Welcome to the new home bar.

Though they never completely disappeared in the years since the heyday of the wood-paneled rec room, home bars weren't really fashionable, either. Now they're enjoying something of a comeback, fueled by the seemingly bottomless appetite for home improvements and the availability of compact bar appliances.

Today's home bars can range from elaborate, restaurant-style structures with ice makers, refrigerated drawers, wine coolers, beer taps and flat-screen televisions to simpler modular bars and wall units.

### POOF! IT'S A BAR . . .

**N**ot everyone wants or needs a home bar, but designer Libby Langdon has some ideas on how to create one temporarily and attractively.

Guests always seem to gravitate to the kitchen, she says, but they also gather around a bar, so placing one away from the kitchen will help spread people around and improve the flow.

Just choose a buffet, a console or side table, a dining table or desk, clear it off and start decorating.

"Dress it up with a tablecloth, a great scarf or table runner or a wide ribbon," said the New York-based commentator on

HGTV's "Small Space, Big Style" show. Then put out your glasses, liquor, ice bucket, wine, corkscrews, small bowls of lemons and limes and the mixers. She suggests a small bucket of beer, dressed up with sprigs of greenery. Put juices in pitchers rather than their original containers.

She also loves to put out martini glasses filled with nuts and olives. Put appetizers nearby and let people mix or pour their own drinks. It's a great conversation starter, she said.

She suggests decorating the bar area with small votive candles atop square mirrored tiles, available at home improvement stores. "They look fantastic because the light is reflected in

the tiles."

For an elegant decoration on a bar, create a grouping of tapered white candles in glass and silver candlesticks of varying sizes, along with small vases or bowls of white blooms like roses and lilies.

"That is a surefire recipe for an elegant upscale look: just keep everything white and silver . . . you want it to be visually interesting but not cluttered."

And for a New Year's Eve party, she said, a good way to phase out holiday decor while retaining the spirit of the season is to fill bowls, vases, or pitchers with silver Christmas tree ornaments. "With the candles, they'll create a beautiful inviting glow."

— CAROL POLSKY





NEWSDAY PHOTOS / KEN SPENCER

Paul Mallia of East Setauket loves the bar he and his wife, Denise, had put in their basement.



**HOME WORK**

An LI woman buys her first home, with the help of a nonprofit housing group.

**B15**



A wine cooler is part of a bar at an East Hills' couple's home.



This Kings Point home's free-standing copper bar is backed by a wine and glass storage unit.

And the glass-fronted wine cooler is becoming downright common in kitchen renovations. "There has been great interest in the last two to three years in installing home bars and home entertainment centers, and, after 9/11, I'd would say that interest has probably doubled in terms of people actually doing them," said Karen Belz, vice president of marketing for Goldman Associates, which deals in high-end kitchen appliances.

A wet bar — which has at the minimum a sink and liquor and glassware storage, and frequently an ice maker, a wine cooler and a small refrigerator — is a "given" in every new home costing more than \$1 million on Long Island, while sales of wine storage refrigerators have tripled over the last three years, estimated Belz.

Even the Hawaiian-flavored tiki bar is making a reappearance, said Frank Pennisi, sales

manager for Bar-Boy Products in Farmingdale, who observed that home bars had "died out for many, many years." Now, he said, they're taking off again. More manufacturers are making prebuilt modular bars in a wide choice of furniture-like finishes, he said, "not like four or five years ago, when we had two styles and they were Formica."

Although not every contractor reports a significant upswing in custom bar units, some do, like Tommy Bucco, of TMI Builders, who built the basement bar for his neighbors the Mallias. He also added a wet bar and wine storage to his own kitchen recently.

The 3,000-square-foot-plus homes built in large numbers in Suffolk County by developers over the last half decade are being renovated and upgraded, he said. "Everyone seems to be

See BARS on B17



# Entertaining at your own bar

## BARS from B12

putting in bars and butler pantries," he said. "And as people go ahead and remodel the unfinished basement, the bars have become a focal point."

Luxury home architect James Smiros, of Glen Cove, said he's been putting in wet bars for years, but that there's a demand now for big stand-behind bars. "We did them years ago but then there was no demand for them. Suddenly it's back again. People are asking for it because it's part of home entertainment . . . they want a fun evening, they want to make it lighthearted and still be at home."

### The sky's the limit

And that experience can be posh indeed: Architect Marc Spector of the Spector Group, for example, said he is doing a bar that will cost more than a quarter-million dollars, with a hammered copper top, rustic heavy timber construction, exposed bolt connections, under-counter lighting, a dozen bar stools and multiple flat-screen televisions behind it.

"They become the social center of the large great rooms where we're locating them," said Spector, whose partner and father, Michael Spector, de-

signed his own bar, a striking contemporary S-curve of glass.

As in Michael Spector's home, bars can be decorative in living rooms as well as family rooms. Interior designers Scott Ornstein and Mary Rabiner of Kings Point are opening up floor plans and turning formal spaces into areas more suitable for today's casual entertaining styles.

"The living room is antiquated," said Ornstein, "We're making fabulous lounges that contain the big beautiful bar and it's the gathering place for the adults, a more sophisticated area for themselves."

Shari, a North Shore client of theirs who asked that her last name not be used, loves the nickel-studded copper bar they created in her family room, which opens into the adjacent kitchen that they redesigned.

"The bar to me means good wine and food. It doesn't mean drinking," said Shari, who loves to cook and entertain buffet-style. "I did it because I wanted a gathering place for my food. That's why I made it so large and kept chairs away from the counter space."

Now there's room for her husband's wine collection, shelves for her vintage glasses and barware, cabinets for liquor bottles and refrigerated drawers



NEWSDAY PHOTOS / KEN SPENCER

**Top, custom-made bar in an East Hills' home; right, bar in the East Setauket home of TMI Builders' Tommy Bucco**

for mixers.

Storage and organization were also a motive for a couple in Roslyn who added an 8½-foot-long, built-in unit to their family room as a wet bar. "I was looking for a self-contained area for beverage service," said the husband, a lawyer with two teenage children, who asked that his name not be used.

Though his wife was opposed to the idea at first, he said his only regret is that he went with the 50-bottle wine refrigerator, rather than the 200-bottle model. His wife, resigned to the bar now, still likes to keep the liquor behind locked doors. "When we have company," she conceded, "it's nice to have."







**HOME**  
**Style underfoot**

When it comes to rugs, bold patterns and strong colors are in  
**BACK COVER**

# part 2

COVER STORY, B2-3

# The battle for hip-hop's soul

**IMPULSE!**

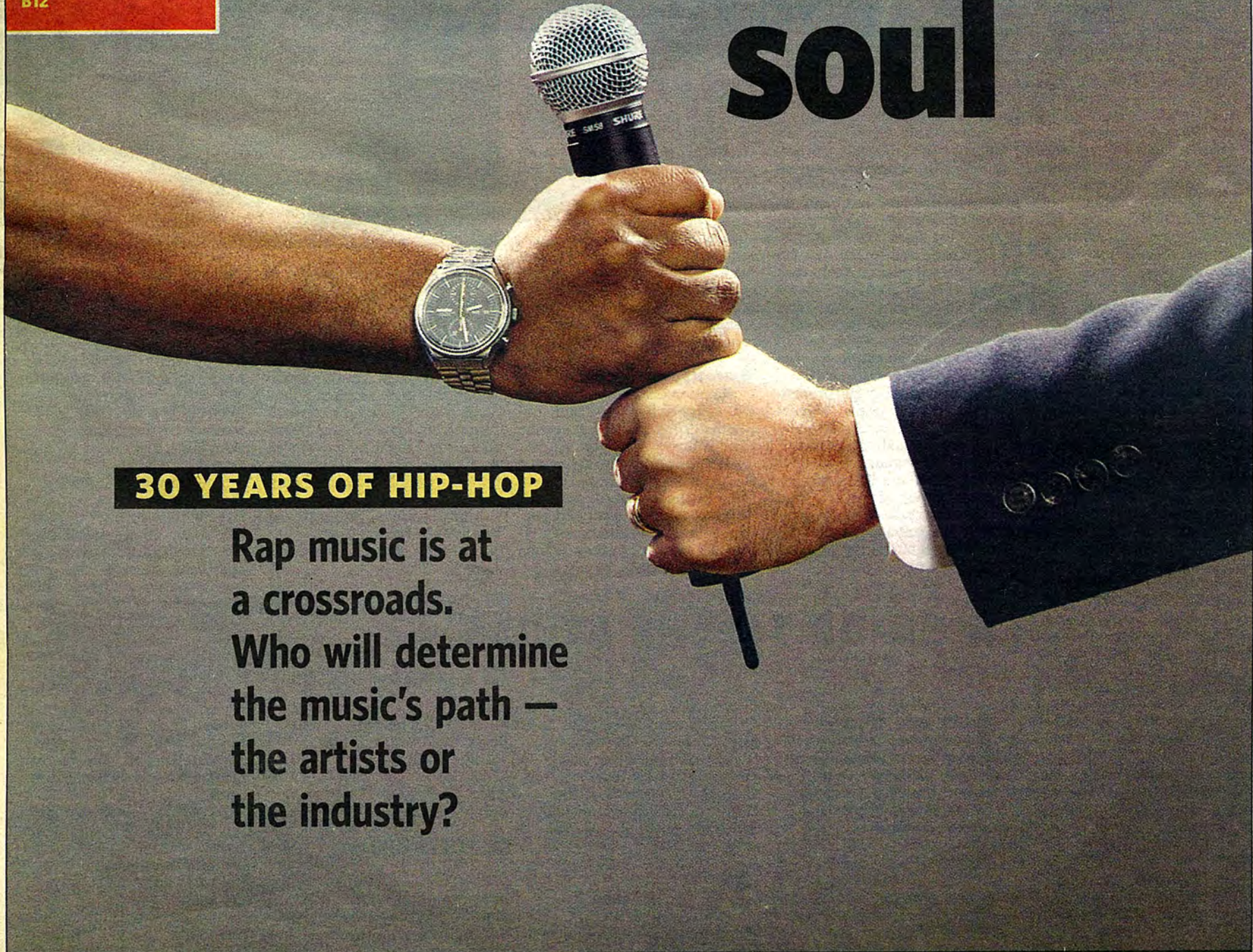
**A Star (Bar) is born**

B7

**INTERVIEW**

'Reckless' theater revisited

B12



**30 YEARS OF HIP-HOP**

Rap music is at a crossroads. Who will determine the music's path — the artists or the industry?

NEWSDAY PHOTO ILLUSTRATION / KEN SPENCER



## HOME COVER STORY

## Floor fashions

## RUGS from B56

in a small room the rug becomes the excitement and makes the room look larger. . . . You want it to be part of the composition, but you want the eye to go to the rug if it's the focal point."

## Focal points

Such rugs have certainly gained visibility in shelter magazines in recent years. One of Maine-based Angela Adams' rugs — a red geometric runner — showed up on the set of Donald Trump's television show "The Apprentice." Adams, originally a decorative painter, also creates handbags and wall hangings. Her namesake company sells furniture designed by her husband, Sherwood Hamill. But she is best known, perhaps, for her rugs of hand-tufted, hand-shorn New Zealand wool that which range from geometric shapes to patterns inspired by nature.

"What I try and achieve is an inspirational feeling in a room — one that is peaceful or inspiring because of the colors and textures. Comfort is essential."

The market for bolder rugs has grown, interior designer Jeff Lincoln suggests, along with a growing interest in color in general, and as a way to inject color and pattern into the frequently neutral fabric palettes of modern decor.

And, he said, some of them help fill the demand for the bold graphics of sought-after vintage mid-1900s rugs by designers such as Edward Fields and Stanislav S'Voske, whose namesake rug manufacturing company in New York continues to make highly valued commissioned carpets and rugs.

New companies such as The Rug Co. based in London, have sprung up over the past decade to provide fashion-inspired patterns and new takes on old traditions. "I like The Rug Co. rugs," says Lincoln, speaking of the 6-year-old company that has successfully marketed rugs designed by, among others, fashion designers Paul Smith and Diane von Furstenberg. "They may be the collectibles of tomorrow, but who knows."

Yet before you think that living rooms everywhere are sprouting shags and stripes, be reminded that the majority of homeowners are staying with more traditional styles and approaches, say designers and those in the carpet business.

"The market for people who want an Angela Adams rug is very small," says Lincoln, an interior designer in Manhattan and Locust Valley. "The usual wealthy client lives in a traditional home for the most part and you're not going to put an Angela Adams in them."



NEWSDAY PHOTO / BILL DAVIS

Glen Carr of Data Carpet and Rug in New Hyde Park agrees. "What you see in the magazines is only a very small segment of what people buy." And he makes a distinction between the city and the suburbs.

## City vs. suburbs

The Nepalese, or Tibetan rug — a thick, lustrous wool rug often with rich color and nontraditional patterns — usually sells better in Manhattan than suburbia, he says, observing that it's an easy way to inject color and "a contemporary vibrancy" into a decor.

Indeed, at ABC Carpet, "the Nepalese look is very, very big," says Rick Jacobs, a vice president. And shags in vibrant shades, sisals and Gabbehs — an old-style rug that has contemporary appeal with its "cute and funky" designs of little camels or people on a colorful background — also are selling well, says rug buyer Alex Kimia. "We've been doing more and more contemporary design rugs and it's just a big trend right now."

Outside Manhattan, what sells best are traditional Orientals in clear jewel tones and those with more casual, contemporary colors such as aubergine, salmon, beige and earth

tones, Carr says. Needlepoints and Aubussons remain strong, while those searching for a more modern look are choosing Deco-inspired geometrical patterns.

Lincoln says he prefers to use updated traditional weaves that "look fresh without screaming too much. I'm always leery of these very bold graphic carpets and their risk of dating themselves quickly. . . . Anything that is too visually arresting in a room is going

to tire you out."

The people at The Rug Co., which also sells traditional reproductions alongside its better-known free-wheeling original designs, would argue that modern designs can complement traditional settings. "You have people who say, 'I don't know, it's too bold' and then they fall in love with it," says Rug Co. spokeswoman Alex Conway at the Manhattan branch. "We let them take [a rug] out on loan to see how it



Above, a checkerboard rug in Scott Ornstein's home; top, two Nani Marquina designs; left, Madelaine, by William Yeoward for The Rug Co.

looks in their home and they find that what looks so bold and scary becomes this beautiful centerpiece. A rug doesn't have to be this beige thing on your floor. It becomes art."

Designer John Barman, who has produced works for The Rug Co., believes in letting the floor covering provide a room's color and pattern. So he likes to use solid color furnishings that allow boldly graphic rugs to take center stage. That's what he did in his own Manhattan apartment, where red and white chairs play a supporting role to a red rug featuring raised squares.

For Lee Mindel, an award-winning architect and interior designer with Shelton, Mindel and Associates in New York, the floor is part of the architecture and the choice of its covering is never merely decorative.

"People lose sight that the floor is as important an architectural element as anything in the project," he says. "The two largest spaces are the ceiling and the floor, and they should





be seen as opportunities to integrate into the architecture to make it stronger."

He suggests a series of questions to consider when designing a space: How is it meant to make you feel? Do you want it to seem bigger or smaller, to use and exaggerate available light or ignore it, to direct attention to the floor in order to distract from problems elsewhere; how does the rug relate to window treatments or wall color?

#### Many decisions

"None of these should be arbitrary decisions. They are all opportunities to make a cohesive space," says Mindel, who often works with famed rug manufacturer S'Voske to develop rugs that help resolve architectural issues with a couture-like attention to detail and nuance in color, material, weave and finish.

In one apartment he designed overlooking Central Park, he and S'Voske created a rug "like a gigantic raked Japanese garden, with a big, big scale loop" in lines like a grid. "Most of the furniture is curved, and they become landscape elements that sit on the landscape grid."

In the children's bedrooms off a hallway in that same apartment, they installed intensely colored carpets in turquoise and Pepto-Bismol pink that Mindel says work together because they're of the same intensity.

"If you're going to be experiencing a series of rooms in succession, you should think about how they're going to relate to each other. You wouldn't want to see a gigantic space with a gigantic Flokati, then a small den with a small fake Persian because your husband wants a cozy Anglo-style library, and then a chartreuse and magenta Austin Powers



**Clockwise from top left: a 6-by-9-foot rug by Angela Adams; an Ikea design; an Emma Gardner creation; designer Lee Mindel uses a Pepto-Bismol color to underscore the importance of the floor.**

lounge-lizard rug because your daughter wants a funky media room." A Flokati, by the way, is a traditional Greek rug with long wool shag.

Bold touches can be achieved by placing small rugs on top of the main flooring or accessories, he says, without "grafitti-ing it all over the floor. If you were getting dressed in the morning, hopefully you wouldn't put on every fashion instinct you had simultaneously."

Not everyone, of course, can afford an exquisite rug tailor-made for their space. For those of more shallow pocket and youthful bent, La-Z-Boy sells Todd Oldham-designed rugs with a retro feel that's modern all over again.

And Ikea, which sells contemporary design inexpensively, is offering bolder colors, lots of round rugs and textures.

"Our younger customers are very interested in texture and pile, rag rugs and shag," said Mark Lewis, an Ikea manager who used to head its North American rug and textile division. "We've also seen a re-interest in Berber carpets with the growing interest in textures. People are asking for them."

They're also buying up bright, handmade Iranian- and Indian-made Gabbehs and hadaman Oriental rugs.

Says Lewis, "As centerpieces in rooms with hardwood or laminate flooring, the more boldly colored Persians and Gabbehs can look fantastic in the modern room."